

Committee on Ways and Means

Democrat Rhetoric Doesn't Match Reality On Unemployment Benefits

December 2003

Democrat Rhetoric

Democrats claim that the current Federal Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) program will "expire two days after Christmas." (*Pete Stark, Joint Economic Committee press release, December 5, 2003*)

Reality

- Under present law, the current TEUC program will pay benefits through March 2004.
- In January, 740,000 unemployed workers will continue to collect TEUC benefits. (*Source: Congressional Budget Office*)
- A total of \$1.2 billion in TEUC benefits will be paid during January-March 2004. (*Source: Congressional Budget Office*)

To put this \$1.2 billion in TEUC spending in 2004 in perspective, 69 of 83 current Federal means-tested benefits programs will spend less during this same period, including: Foster care (\$1.1 billion in projected spending during January through March 2004), Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) (\$1.1 billion), State Children's Health Insurance (S-CHIP) (\$0.9 billion), Pensions for needy veterans, their dependents, and survivors (\$0.8 billion), Low-income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP) (\$0.5 billion), TANF child care (\$0.4 billion), and Maternal and child health services block grant (\$0.2 billion). (*Source: Ways and Means staff calculations, based on Congressional Research Service data.*)